

Impact

Without measure

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What is the greatest gift we can give another person? When we really reflect on this question, our deepest response will most certainly be "presence." To give another the gift of our attention, care and love is a present that is never outdated and is everlasting. We may be more aware of this now than ever before. If there is one lesson we may carry from the pandemic it is that we need others. There is something significant missing in our lives when we are unable to be present or to know another's presence.

Our presence is a share of our self, as Christ's love is a share of the immense love of God. We who have been baptized into Christ offer that love to others through our presence as stewards of all we are and have and will be. Through participation in the Eucharist, we are given all we need in Christ's gift of presence with and for us. Our pandemic time has given us a new appreciation of this as well, as most of us have longed for the Eucharist and the presence of one another at Mass for many months. The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is an immeasurable treasure.

"And what is the measure of God? Without measure! The measure of God is without measure. Everything! Everything! Everything! It's impossible to measure the love of God: it is without measure! And so we become capable

of loving even those who do not love us: and this is not easy. To love someone who doesn't love us.... It's not easy! Because if we know that a person doesn't like us, then we also tend to bear ill will. But no! We must love even someone who doesn't love us! Opposing evil with good, with pardon, with sharing, with welcome." (Pope Francis, June, 2014)

Our prayers, our gifts of time, talent and our material resources are signs of our awareness that we are blessed beyond measure. Recognizing that we are "fearfully, wonderfully made," the gift of self, our presence, is a true sign and blessing that cannot be diminished over time.

While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it."

- Mk 14:22-24

"Thanks to Jesus and to his Spirit, even our life becomes 'bread broken' for our brothers. And living like this we discover true joy! The joy of making oneself a gift, of reciprocating the great gift that we have first received, without merit of our own. This is beautiful: our life is made a gift! This is to imitate Jesus. I wish to remind you of these two things. First: the measure of God's love is love without measure. Is this clear? And our life, with the love of Jesus, received in the Eucharist, is made a gift. As was the life of Jesus. Don't forget these two things: the measure of the love of God is love without measure. And following Jesus, we, with the Eucharist, make of our life a gift." (Pope Francis, June 2014)

Impact this month

This month, use the quote below as a springboard for reflection on the ways the Eucharist shapes you to know and share Christ's love.

And what do Christians bring to the Eucharistic celebration and join there with Jesus' offering?

Their lives as Christian disciples; their personal vocations and the stewardship they have exercised regarding them; their individual contributions to the great work of restoring all things in Christ.

Disciples give thanks to God for gifts received and strive to share them with others. (SDR, p. 34)

"A selfish faith would be an unreal faith. Whoever believes in Jesus Christ and enters into the dynamic of love that finds its source in the Eucharist discovers true joy and becomes capable, in turn, of living according to the logic of gift. God is not isolation, but glorious and joyful love, spreading outward and radiant with light."

Benedict XVI, February 2012



When tiny becomes mighty - by Leisa Anslinger

Throughout his ministry, in everything he did and taught, Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God. He reached out to those who were sick, dying, in need of mercy and forgiveness. Jesus shows us that God's desire is that all of humanity might know and share love. Unexpected, sometimes confounding, sacrificial love.

Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed - the smallest of all the seeds on the earth, which springs up and becomes a large plant. If God's kingdom is the reign of love, then even our smallest actions on behalf of love can grow beyond our imagining. Think of all the opportunities we have to show and to share love every day. Times when we put impatience aside, linger with someone who is struggling, give our time in service. These small acts expand our hearts and make Christ's presence known.

Tiny seeds of mercy, compassion, and caring grow into mighty expressions of the incredible love of God. Doing this is simple but it is not always easy. It requires us to make the perspective of the Lord our own, to have as our greatest desire that all will know and share love.

What tiny seed of love will you plant today? How does the Eucharist shape and nourish you to be a sower of the seeds of Christ's presence? What might be the mighty impact of your sharing in the lives of others and for the life of the world?

Impact. Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.